Fall/Win. 94
HSPD - Publications - Newsletters
00-00-4/96

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FALL/WINTER 1994 "THE HOURGLASS" NEWSLETTER

FALL LUNCHEON & GENERAL MEETING – October brings renewed life to the desert and an infusion of spirit to civic, social and cultural organizations. Such was the case with the gathering at the Shadow Mountain Club on October 21.

Jean Benson, Palm Desert City councilwoman, installed new officers: President Bob Keedy, Vice President Jean Hollenbeck, Immediate Past President Ed Mullins, Secretary Ginny Folkers and Treasurer Jean Martin. Directors installed included Caroline Berkey, Bonnie Bowie, Dan Callahan, Fay Bowie, Doloris Driskel, Theda Lundquist, Russ Marshall, Kermit Martin and Gary Olesen. Benson gave miniature key-to-the-city pins to the board members. She also presented a proclamation to the Society in memory of Mary Kay Van de Mark, one of Palm Desert's pioneer citizens who recently passed away.

Rev. Dean Miller, retired pastor of the Palm Desert Community Church and citizen of the desert since 1961, was the principal speaker at the luncheon. He shared information about the church's beginnings as well as his association with President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his family in the sixties. The church went through three name changes beginning with Shadow Mountain Church, then Palm Desert Community Church and, finally, Palm Desert Community Presbyterian Church.

The congregation first met outdoors on the site at Portola and Chicory in December of 1948. In the fall of 1949, services were moved to the Shadow Mountain Stables where worshippers pulled up a bale of hay for seating until chairs were donated. Some services were held in a private home. In 1950 the original chapel, valued at about $32,000 including the land, was built and continued in use for some eighteen years. Soon after Miller's arrival, philanthropist Howard Ahmanson sold three acres and gave two acres each to Miller's congregation and to St. Margaret's Episcopal Church on Highway 74. Church structures were erected and stand side-by-side at the present time.

Rev. Miller delighted the Society members with anecdotes of the Eisenhowers, their warmth and compassion and concern for children. They actively participated on the building committee and spoke at the church dedication in 1968, just a year before President Eisenhower's death. Miller's comment "When I came here I knew all the old timers, now I am one" resonated with his audience. The group clapped their appreciation and Ed Benson lamented that Rev. Miller's fine talk had not been taped on the spot.

As the presidency passed from Ed Mullins to Bob Keedy there was a general feeling that the gavel had moved from good hands to good hands. The community owes a great deal to these fine pioneers.

Out of town members as well as local stalwarts who were seen enjoying the event were: Edith Morrey, Marian Henderson, Ruth Miller, Bill Wallace, Phil Franklin, Del Davitt (who promised tp provide historical data on KGOL), Frances Jo Oetting, Suzy Simmons, Millie Beatty, Bill & Hazel O'Neil, Del Sharbutt and his son, Bill, visiting from New York. Also Bob Keedy's son and daughter, Doug Keedy and Barbara Eastes, looking so proud as dad was installed as president. Marian Miller was with the Palm Desert church historian, Florence Maxwell.... It was a happy day....

The Multi-Agency Library's "ground broken" ceremony followed right on the heels of the luncheon. Many of the same individuals gathered at the McCallum Theatre where Ginger Rogers presented her special collection and first editions project, and introduced authors who had committed to participate. Two uplifting events in one day, not uncommon in our desert during the season. Wonder where everyone went that evening?

WITH SYMPATHY to their families and friends

Mary Kay Van de Mark Bert Cavannaugh Les Yoxsimer Lenore Cowan

SUPPORT FLOWS as interest grows

We appreciate the support of the Ahmanson Corporation, LERS and ACD2, and donated materials from the following:

Laura Rash - Resorter newspaper

Anne Fitz Gerrell - News items about Anne & Harold Carpenter/Grace & Rocky Hume

Rheo Lawman - Newspaper article on Carmel heritage

Helen Dengler - An account of the development and operation of White Sun Guest Ranch written by Forry & Topsy Haller

C. T. Price - Memorabilia, a dispatching log from 1968-69 and firefighting manuals. Also a most interesting wooden holder and 16 pitched forks that were used to radio signal firefighters to the location of the fire.

Palm Desert Rotary Club - Donated $1000 last spring which is being used to research and enhance the history of Palm Desert service clubs. What a terrific boost!!

Mini-Muster donations were received from:

Dan Glo Construction, Inc., owned by Daniel & Gloria Kelly

Jack & Bonnie Bowie Ed & Ginny Mullins Dan & B.J. Callahan

Southern California Edison Jerry & Jan Holmlund Diven & Marian Meredith

Edwin & Theda Lundquist

Thanks to one and all for these valuable contributions which are being put to good use!

MINI-MUSTER '94 - Fire safety training for third graders, sponsored by the Historical Society of Palm Desert. Fire safety and fun have become synonymous for students at Gerald Ford, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington Schools where the Mini-Muster was held on three consecutive days. Under the able guidance of Barbara "B.J." and Dan Callahan, this second annual event has resulted in a valuable community outreach program.

Station 33 of the Riverside County Fire Department: Chief Vogt, Capt. Yazloff and the firefighters; Desert Sands Unified School District: administrators, teachers, parents and students; and volunteers from the Society, all cooperated and it spelled SUCCESS. Nearly a thousand children now have had the hands-on experience of escaping from a smoke-filled room while blindfolded, know the stop/drop/& roll drill, have handled a fire hose and used the stream to knock over a target, have been part of a bucket brigade, etc. Each activity is scaled to a child's size and ability. These exercises mimic the actual training given to professional firefighters.

Society photographer, Roger Keezer, was introduced to the extension ladder rig by Capt. Clarance Homer. High up above the activities on the ground, Roger was able to get some spectacular aerial shots. Eric Hovren and George Casaric, and ALL the firefighters had a mutual rapport with the children which added to the joy of the event.

Mini-Muster is by way of becoming our annual "signature event", since our Society is headquartered in Palm Desert's original fire station on El Paseo. Utilizing the educational precept that "what is fun to learn stays with us", we hope the children gain skills which could save a life in the future, their own or that of a fellow human being.

Sunday reception on October 30 honored Station 33 firefighters, who were present in force along with fire engines and the sophisticated Hazardous Materials engine which was open for public viewing. Awards were made to children who excelled, and student art work and appreciation letters (touching and direct) were on display.

Mini-Muster (cont'd.) Video clips of TV coverage of the Mini-Muster were shown. Some senior firefighters shared memories of when the El Paseo station was active.

Society volunteers kept things running smoothly: Bob Keedy was busy with the Polaroid camera, Fay Bowie at the guest book, Bev Riley at the punch bowl, B.J. and Dan Callahan were EVERYWHERE, and others talked with the guests.

SUMMER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Computerization....A new Macintosh Performa 575 was installed in the office, thanks to the City of Palm Desert. Office secretary, Bonnie Bowie, and President Bob Keedy have been taking computer classes at the Joslyn Senior Center. We are pleased that new labels, listings and other materials needed for reports and printing will be possible with this equipment.

Signs of progress:

- marker placed at the site of the first Palm Desert City Hall, corner Hwy. 74 & 111
- new signage on the front lawn at Society Headquarters and on city streets
- updating of the historic site listing
- local history pamphlet being circulated for comment before printing
- Bylaws revision to accommodate a larger board and a 2-year cycle of elections
- staffed a Society booth at the Chamber of Commerce's Business Expo in September There was an amazing display of almost 200 booths. Ed Mullins Pharmacy had a pictorial history that belongs in the archives!
- former Society presidents research by Jan Holmlund for a plaque now on display
- photos and historical information used by: Morton's of Chicago restaurant, Palm Springs Life magazine, Hope Enterprises (material on Dolores Reade Hope, former honorary mayor of Palm Desert.) New negatives and prints are created from fees for photograph service.

MEMBERS TRAVELED during the summer.....on foot, by air, some changed houses, some changed jobs.

Jean Hollenbeck flew to London with a group led by Gwen Znerold from Des Moines, who winters at Sunrise. Gwen is a certified antiques appraiser and has lectured extensively in the desert. The group made interesting, out-of-the-way stops at places like Ye Olde Cheshire Inn.....Jean and her still-not-retired husband, Clyde "Holly", also traveled to No. Carolina and to Oregon to celebrate Holly's mother's 98th birthday - and to Buck's Lake near Tahoe to visit friends. Good planning!

Kermit Martin has retired from Southern California Edison and has become the Director of Government Affairs for Waste Management of the Desert, a second career. He continues to make time for the Historical Society where his level head is much appreciated. Did you see Waste Managements' clever float in the Golf Cart Parade? On the ever-timely theme, recycling.

Roger & Maria Keezer expend high energy - they are leaders for the Coachella Valley Hiking Club. Seven members recently explored the Mammoth ski resort area and capped the trip by hiking Mt. Whitney in 12 hours. Roger is now known as "Mountain Goat." He was the first to attain the summit! Two weeks ago Roger and Maria led a hike from the valley floor to the top of Mt. San Jacinto and that, too, is one heckuva hike! Oh, yes..... between hikes and work for the Historical Society, the Keezers moved from Sommerset in Palm Desert to a lovely new home in Palm Springs - more room for dog and grandkids.

ELECTIONS - Society headquarters is being used as a polling place as part of our service to the community.

MEDIA LIBRARY, photographs and video

Roger Keezer is our official photographer. As well as covering events like Mini-Muster, Roger is often seen identifying and sorting photos and placing them into protective covers. He has put together two videos from Society slides, so "Old Palm Desert" is much more alive. Roger would like a student or adult assistant who is interested in photography and would like to learn more. Might that person be you?

COLLECTIONS CURATOR - printed matter of all kinds

Ginny Folkers is forging ahead with the job which satisfies but never ends. Much work has been accomplished working from the files of Hal Kapp and Randall Henderson. Ruth Miller made it her summer project to do a complete set of subject index cards for old issues of Palm Desert News. Mary Safe has been coming in weekly. Thanks, gals!

MONDAYS are work days at the Society. A movie mogul once said, "If two men on the same job agree all the time, then one is useless. If they disagree all the time, then both are useless." There are no useless volunteers in the Historical Society. Come join us!

NEEDED: - photos of building that have been torn down (the old adobe at Hwy. 74 and 111.....the Jake Swafford house near the Iron Gate)
- old telephone books and business directories
- information about births and deaths of Palm Desert pioneers
- verification of dates and facts about early day individuals and happenings
- equipment to tape talks like Rev. Miller's.....urgently needed

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING

Two or four year terms for the current board of directors were drawn by lots to assure continuity for the future. Results were as follows:

4 Year Terms		2 Year Terms	
Fay Bowie	Kermit Martin	Bonnie Bowie	Theda Lundquist
Dan Callahan	Gary Olesen	Doloris Driskel	Russ Marshall
Caroline Berkey			

Ed Mullins thanked volunteers and submitted a report of his two years as board president. He presented a past president's plaque to Dan Callahan and engraved clocks to Jean Benson and Sheila Gilligan, two from the City of Palm Desert who have served and given unfailing support to the Historical Society.

Bob Keedy surprised Ed Mullins with a past president's plaque. Both Dan and Ed assured Bob that he would receive a similar one in the future, but for now his steady hand was needed on the tiller.

WELCOME to new members

Lynda C. Anderson	William A. Dugger	Mark & Amy Swan Draper
Irene Dodds	Doloris Driskel	Russell V. & Jeanine Petersen
Roger & Maria Keezer	Jack & Mary Macy	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Tobiassen
Ken & Lourina McGhee	Ruth C. Miller	Fred & Shirlee Smith
John Outcault	Beverly Riley	Helene T. Smith
Fern & Leta Stout	Larry Carlton	Mary Anne Shutes
Cecil Gregoire	Ray & Jo Miller of the EVERGREEN PRESS	
	Morton's of Chicago, Palm Desert Inc.	

And to all who rejoined or renewed during 1994, a big THANK YOU.....we can't do anything without YOU!

NEWS FROM NEIGHBORING ASSOCIATIONS

Coachella Valley Museum & Cultural Center had its 10th anniversary party in Indio. Under the auspices of the Riverside County Historical Commission, it was dedicated as a California Point of Interest on October 15.

La Quinta Historical Museum is using the gambel quail as it distinctive design. Little "gamby" comes in silver or gold. Ned Millis will be glad to explain.

Palm Springs Historical Society calendar for 1995 will be on sale Nov. 13 in the McCallum Adobe and the Cornelia White House. This is the nineteenth edition and will feature photographs of the World War II era.

From the pioneer file - Who knows the occasion? The date?

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! See you in 1995.

Theda Lundquist, Editor